

Steering Committee Meeting

August 21, 2001 - 3:30 pm - 307 Ferguson

(Corrected Minutes)

Attending: Norm Baldwin, Margaret Garner, Steve Miller, Keith Woodbury, Bill Keel, Harry Price, Terry Royed, Beth Macauley, Don DeSmet, John Mason, Harry Price and Alvin Winters. Guest: Steve Reeves, The Tuscaloosa News

The July Steering Committee minutes were approved.

Mediation and Grievance Document - The process of a faculty member grieving another faculty member has been added. Attorneys are allowed to represent faculty during tribunals **only** in the following situations: "(1) the instance of the attempted revocation of the tenure of a tenured faculty member for adequate cause, where a dispute exists as to the facts or the adequacy of the cause presented; (2) the instance of an administrator seeking to dismiss a probationary faculty member or a full-time temporary faculty member before the end of the term of employment specified either by the *Faculty Handbook* or by a contract between the University and the individual; and (3) the instance of a faculty grievance against the imposition of a severe sanction." An attorney otherwise may be an observer but may not take an active role during the proceedings and cannot address the Tribunal. *Severe sanctions* are further defined in Section Four of the Grievance Document.

The task and responsibility of administrators and the possibility of administrator recourse against the grieving faculty member was discussed. Discussion included the role of the ombudsperson (the Vice President of the Faculty Senate) prior to the grievance procedure. The role of the ombudsperson was removed from the Grievance Document. It was decided that, in a few instances, minor clarification and changed wording in the document were needed to reflect the consensus of the Steering Committee. Copies will be sent to Ron Rogers and the Provost. The Provost prefers no attorney involvement, but the Steering Committee feels these changes will be a compromise position.

The issue of having a **debate time limit** regarding the Mediation and Grievance Document during the Faculty Senate meeting was discussed. The point was made that this is a very important document and it should not proceed to a faculty referendum without careful discussion and review. An option would be a one-agenda Faculty Senate meeting. A motion could come from the floor to limit discussion time. The limited number of times a person could speak was also discussed. It was agreed to informally limit individuals to five minutes speaking time and to allow Senators to speak a second time only after everyone else has had an opportunity to speak. Steve Miller will monitor the length of time each individual speaks.

Two introductions ("whereas statements") to "**A Resolution Calling For Desegregation of the Greek System and the Means to Accomplish This End**" were presented to the Steering Committee. The first seven "whereas" clauses are negative and the last five are positive. Opinions expressed in the meeting included that the longer version gave a clearer view of the history of discrimination and had a bigger impact than the shorter version. It was the consensus of the Steering Committee to pass this resolution before rush. It was suggested and approved to remove the word "actively" from the resolution. The point was made that other minorities were not included in the resolution. It was explained that there are other minorities in sororities and fraternities, however, there is not an African-American member in those organizations. It was suggested to rearrange the "whereas" clauses but the final decision was to leave it as it was written. The word "theological" was

deleted and the word "desegregation" was preferred to "integration". It was stated that it was a bad message for The University of Alabama to have a dual rush system, but it was also noted that there will be some opposition to creating a unified rush.

The discussion included a clause by clause review of the "**Means to Achieving a Desegregated Greek System**" with complete agreement on the "A" section, "Unified Rush." Section "B" "Modifications to Blackball Systems and Recommendation Systems" was supported. Discussion of Section "C" included the points that membership should be based on merit and not perpetuation of family membership. There was a consensus to delete this section. Section "D", "Zero Tolerance for Alumni and Citizen Threats and Actions" was accepted with no changes being made. Section "E", "Sanctions for Racial Discrimination in Selection and for Social Boycotts" included the discussion of organizations boycotting the organization that integrates first. This section was also accepted. Section "F", "Faculty Involvement and Rewards for Involvement" states that faculty has a responsibility to be involved and cannot sit back and criticize if there is a lack of involvement. This section was approved. Section "G", "Greek Accreditation" is a vehicle for accountability but a timetable or goal is not stated. Section "H", "Commendations for Outreach" lets people know what has been done. Section G and H were both approved. Section "I", "Commendations for Outreach" will have the word "actively" deleted. There will be a cover letter written to accompany the resolution.

There are no time frames suggested in this resolution. There are varying opinions on this issue including the feeling that a time frame was an ultimatum that would be reacted to negatively, that time frames would give this document more "teeth," and that timeframes would bring about a change more quickly. What would happen if those time lines were not met? What is a reasonable length of time to implement a unified rush or to achieve desegregation? It was suggested that different elements of the resolution and different organizations would require different timeframes. Other suggestions were to have an annual report of progress from the Greek organizations and to include in the resolution that the Faculty Senate will revisit this issue annually. There is a self-assessment report already submitted annually by the Greeks. It was suggested that Greek Desegregation be an annual agenda item for the Student Affairs Committee. A Steering Committee member expressed a concern about telling the students what to do. It was suggested to have a phrase in the resolution, "we see no reason why unified rush cannot be accomplished by the academic year 2002-2003". This was accepted by the Steering Committee. The Greek coordinating bodies and the Office of Student Affairs would coordinate the logistics of a unified rush. The Faculty Senate could offer to be a mediator in this process. The Committee suggested that "Greek desegregation will be an ongoing annual agenda item for the Faculty Senate" should be included in the cover letter associated with the resolution.

Constitutional Reform Seminars. The Legislative Agenda Committee brought a proposal to the Faculty Senate asking for an endorsement and sponsorship of Constitutional Reform seminars to be held on The University of Alabama campus. This, in the future, will be conducted on eight different University campuses in the state. This would be headed by Bailey Thomson of the Journalism Department here on campus and would train leaders to go to the other sites. Margaret Garner is the new state chairman of the Higher Education Partnership organization. The Faculty Senate has gone on record supporting Constitutional reform. These seminars will inform our University community and inspire people to see that advocacy for higher education is critically important. The Steering Committee approved the proposal.

Senate Priorities. It was asked of the committee to establish priorities for the consideration of the Faculty Senate. The results of the faculty survey were available. Of the issues listed in the survey, the Committee identified the issue of improving health

benefits for graduate and undergraduate students as a priority. The Faculty Senate is already addressing the issue of integration of the Greek system, overcoming racism and enhancing diversity and inclusiveness, and Constitutional reform. The maternity and sick was also identified as being a priority. The issue of the proposed fall break and the impact of this proposed change will be referred to the Planning and Operations Committee. Having finals begin the day after classes end will also go to Planning and Operations. Posting student evaluations was discussed and seemingly is a very controversial issue to the members of the Steering Committee.

The increase in health insurance was detailed with a 20% increase being implemented over the next two years. Singles will be paying a higher percentage increase than family coverage.

The breakfast sponsored by the Legislative Agenda Committee will begin on September 14th. A Senate delegation will be present.

Meeting adjourned 6:10 PM